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CLEAN WATER FOR NEW ENGLAND

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CLEAN WATER for *New England*

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Till taught by pain
Men really know not what good water's worth.

Byron.

Water is perhaps the most important of New England's natural resources. No other region in the United States contains a greater abundance of streams, rivers, ponds and lakes than those which characterize the charm that is New England's.

New England today is one of the most densely populated and heavily industrialized areas in the Nation. Its early growth was possible because there was plenty of good water available. In more recent years our waters have supported an increasing variety of activities, including a fast-growing recreation industry.

Today New England uses its water resources for public water supply, industrial water supply, bathing, game fishing, boating, wildlife habitat, commercial fishing, shellfish operations, livestock watering, navigation, power, disposal of wastes, and irrigation.

Through the years our waters have brought us progress and prosperity—and they will continue to do so.

CLEAN WATER

for

NEW

ENGLAND

Water is made available to us from rain and snow in about the same quantity each year. If for any reason we waste it, or destroy its usefulness, that much water is lost to us. *Pollution is the largest single destroyer of New England's water resources.*

How extensive are the damages? Some of New England's streams are still relatively free of pollution or have been made so by adequate abatement measures. But pollution in many of our rivers has destroyed most of our important water uses. And some streams are so badly polluted that they menace our health and spoil the beauty of our surroundings.

Pollution hinders progress. If we are to have a healthy regional economy, our manufacturing and recreation industries, our agriculture, commercial fishing and other income-producing activities, must continue to grow and prosper. They cannot unless we practice pollution control and other water conservation measures. When we waste water, we are wasting dollars.

The Problem of Municipal Pollution

Our cities and towns contribute most to the pollution of New England's waters. Available data show that nearly 800 separate communities discharge the sewage from more than 6½ million people into our waterways. Hundreds of commercial and industrial establishments connected to municipal sewers add the wastes from their processes to this pollution load of human wastes.

The total strength of the municipal and industrial waste discharged to New England waters by municipal sewers approaches,

or even exceeds, the amount of domestic sewage that would be discharged by 10 million persons!

New England streams are no larger today than they were a hundred years ago, but our population and industry have greatly expanded. We will need to make fuller use of our water resources for future growth. And yet, by adding more and more pollution, we are actually *decreasing* the amount of usable water available to us.

The Problem of Industrial Pollution

New England has been geared to industry for more than a century. Today its more than 20,000 plants manufacture a wide variety of products for markets all over the world.

Many of these plants produce wastes in their manufacturing processes. We have already mentioned the hundreds of factories which are connected to municipal sewers. In addition to these, there are more than 1,000 others which discharge their process wastes directly into streams.

Nearly 800 of these plants—makers of textile products, paper, foods, chemicals, leather, rubber, and products from wood, coal and petroleum—discharge wastes which have a polluting effect similar to domestic sewage. We do not have enough information to measure the total polluting effect of all these plants. But we know that the wastes from only 18% of them have as great an effect as the sewage from 1½ million people.

The more than 200 other plants discharging wastes directly into waterways do another kind of damage. These plants manufacture metal products, machinery and the like. They discharge millions of gallons of waste containing acids, metals, oils and other polluting materials every day.

The Solution: Pollution Control

The combined impact of these municipal and industrial wastes has created a serious pollution problem. But the problem can be solved. Wastes may be treated, or, where possible, safely disposed of at sea.

New England municipalities and industries have not kept pace with needs for waste treatment. For nearly 800 sources of munici-

pal pollution only 217 communities have provided treatment plants; only 152 of these are satisfactory. Nearly 600 communities with a total population of over 4 million discharge municipal sewage without treatment!

Industry has fallen even further behind. For more than 1,100 sources of industrial pollution, there are only 142 treatment plants, of which nearly one-half are unsatisfactory.

To control the known pollution of New England's valuable water resources, nearly 700 municipal and 750 industrial sources of pollution require treatment projects. And another 100 municipal

and 300 industrial sources may require treatment when their needs are determined.

Many pollution control projects are now underway in New England. But the need is greater still.

The Cost and Benefits

Based on 1950 cost levels, it is estimated that the municipal sewers and sewage treatment facilities known to be needed at present will cost $200 million. Industry will need to spend an estimated $50 million to control present pollution.

But are these figures really so large? Actually New England's pollution problem is the sum of many local problems. Each of these local problems is small enough to be solved by the community or industry concerned. And that is where the responsibility lies—in the individual towns and industries. For every one of us is somebody's neighbor, and as neighbors in a democracy we have certain rights and certain duties—among them the duty to make sure that our carelessness does not infringe upon our neighbor's rights.

And the costs? With modern financing, the construction cost to each individual over a period of 30 years would be only 90 cents a year—less than the average New Englander earns in one hour. The cost of operating these plants would add only a few cents more.

If each of us does his job, the pollution of New England's water resources will be controlled. And we shall benefit manyfold: through abundant supplies of clean water for our growing population and new and expanded industry, through boundless recreational opportunities, propagation of shellfish, agricultural uses—and in many other ways.

Where does *your* community or industry stand on Clean Water for New England?

The information in this pamphlet is based on a recently released 150-page report on water pollution in New England. This pamphlet and the technical report are cooperative State-Federal publications of the—

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